(b) the quantity of such coal imported by SAIL and the amount spent on it during the last three years; and

(c) the action proposed to be taken by the Government to make available sufficient quantity of indigenous low ash content coal to SAIL?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) Yes, Sir. The Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices has recommended use of 50% imported low ash coal in blend in SAIL plants instead of 10-30% use prevailing in 1987-88/ 1989-90. It has also recommended increase in use of imported coal in blend from 30-50%, as a post-modernisation measure in SAIL plants, for increasing efficiency and productivity.

(b) Quantity and approximate C&F value of 'Low Ash Metallurgical Coking Coal' imported by SAIL during the last three years are as follows:-

| *Year* | *Quantity (Million tonnes)* | *Approx. C&F value (in Rupees)* |
|---|---|---|
| 1988-89 | 3.740 | 329.2 crores |
| 1989-90 | 3.748 | 426.8 crores |
| 1990-91 | 4.493 | 543.8 crores |

(c) Every year all the quantities of coking coal indigenously produced are consumed in the steel sector; imports being resorted to meet only the balance requirement both in quantitative and qualitative terms. Efforts are constantly made to augment the production and washing of the raw coking coal indigenously. Government closely monitors the production of raw coking coal, washed coal and timely despatches to the plants with a view to ensuring that supplies are effected as planned.

**Economic sanctions against South Africa**

3883. SHRIMATI MALINI BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that apartheid policy is still being followed in South Africa despite the formal abolition of the 'Pillars of apartheid' in that country;

(b) whether the Government propose to raise this issue at the international level so as to prevent withdrawal of economic sanctions against South Africa;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government have taken note of the protest by the African National Congress over the lifting of economic sanctions by the US against South Africa; and

(e) if so, reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) At the forthcoming meeting of the Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers on Southern Africa to be held in New Delhi in September 1991, the Government intends to take the stand that it would be premature to lift economic sanctions at this stage and to act in concert with the ANC to clearly spell out conditions under which that can be done.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) The Government is in sympathy with the African National Congress, which considers the lifting of economic sanctions by the US against South Africa as premature.

**Illegal Mining**

3884. SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether illegal mining of different mines is on constant increase; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the remedial steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) Sporadic instances of illegal mining of some minerals do come to notice from time to time. As and when instances of illegal mining come to notice, appropriate measures are taken by the State Governments.

**Waiting list for New Telephone Connections in Agra**

3885. SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state: